HATTIE ELIZABETH LEWIS MEMORIAL

ESSAYS IN APPLIED CHRISTIANITY

# THE EMPLOYER, THE WAGE EARNER AND THE LAW OF LOVE

BY

CHARLES H. WATSON

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# HATTIE ELIZABETH LEWIS MEMORIAL

## ESSAYS IN APPLIED CHRISTIANITY

# THE EMPLOYER, THE WAGE EARNER AND THE LAW OF LOVE

*By* CHARLES H. WATSON, of Lawrence, Kansas

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# PREFATORY NOTE

## The Hattie Elizabeth Lewis Memorial

This Memorial was established in the University of Kansas in 1911, in memory of Hattie Elizabeth Lewis, a former student of the University. It was founded by Professor George Edward Patrick, of Washington, D. C., and is maintained out of funds put into the hands of the Chancellor of the University a few months before Professor Patrick's death, which occurred March 22, 1916. Professor Patrick was a member of the faculty of the University of Kansas from 1874 to 1883. He and Miss Lewis were married in 1883. Mrs. Patrick died in 1909.

The Memorial takes the form of an annual competition in essay writing, open to all students of the University of Kansas. The general theme of the essays submitted in this competition is "The Application of the Teachings of Jesus to the Practical Affairs and Relations of Life, Individual, Social, Industrial, Commercial, or Political;" but each essay must deal with a single definite subject, or a single phase of life. In the competition for the year 1916-17, the University committee in charge of the competition itself prescribed the particular phase of the general theme to which contestants were to be confined: "The Application of the Spirit and Teachings of Jesus to the Relations between the Individual and Society". Each essay is required to be not less than 5,000 nor more than 10,000 words in length.

# THE EMPLOYER, THE WAGE EARNER AND THE LAW OF LOVE

BY

CHARLES H. WATSON

# PREFACE

The writer is quite aware of at least two criticisms which will be offered concerning this essay. Some will not be able to agree with what they would call, "the mixing of business and religion," and regret the fact that a more comprehensive discussion of the present labor problem is not given. The only answer that can be given is that the writer has presented his firm conviction in the light of research and study. Moreover, he feels that no other conclusion can be logical without distorting or evading the premises of Christianity. The fact that this view is not readily accepted by the majority is sufficient justification for devoting so much of the discussion to this phase of the question. Discussions of the labor problem in books, magazines, journals, bulletins and other periodicals are almost innumerable, yet very few of them attempt to say what shall be the attitude of the individual employer toward his men in the light of Christ's teachings. This, the writer has attempted to do.

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# THE EMPLOYER, THE WAGE EARNER AND THE LAW OF LOVE

This is a commercial age in which mammonism is the vitalizing factor. The question of profit stands paramount to all others in the business realm, thus making our industrial establishments mere institutions for the creation of dividends. 'Tis true the present world conflict has caused the patriotism of some of our leading manufacturers to offer their entire resources for governmental purposes without profit; but who doubts that industry, after this unusual condition of war is past, will pursue its previous activity with even greater energy and desire for personal gain? This we can say, then, is an age of business supremacy, when trade has become the leading science, sentiment has been, and is being, pushed aside by the forward rush of commercialism; expediency seems to be successfully competing with morality and religion.[1] So much so, indeed, that many reformers, themselves so taken by the spirit of the time, seem to think this intoxication of mankind by the glitter of mammon is a perfectly normal state. They, together with commercialism itself, acknowledge something is wrong with the present order, but mutually fail to conceive that the present prevailing motive of industrialism may be the underlying cause. With one voice they cry for reform, but immediately limit such reform by pointing out the futility of urging any plan for rectifying present industrial evils, with serious hope for its consideration or ultimate adoption, except the same shall be able to prove its principles are in accord with good "business policy."

What is meant by good business policy? Mr. Purinton says, "A business weak in profit is weak in principle. Poverty is mental deficiency and material defect. Money liberates, without it we are slaves. If you are not making the most profit of any one in your line there is something wrong with you or your methods."[2] Going further he says, "We may be slaves to money but we are slaves without it." In keeping with this idea many conscientious persons, believing that all efforts at reform must plan to make an appeal to this insatiate desire for gain on the part of business,

1. A. Purver: *Annals American Academy*, 20:61.

2. Purinton, Edward Earle: *What makes a Factory Great? Independent*, Feb. 19, 1917, pp. 313-318.

have worked out schemes for the betterment of society and are attempting to show the industries it is to their "advantage" to put such into operation. If an agitation is begun to abolish the smoke nuisance in a city, the main argument is, not that it is injurious to the mass of mankind, but that the smoke "hurts business" and that it really "pays" to consume the wasted carbon. Many industries are now giving considerable attention to the welfare of their employees. Industrial sanitation, proper housing and ventilation, safety devices and social life committees are being provided. But here again is the same cry, the plea for the extended adoption of these comforts is, that expenditures for the health of the laborers pays largest dividends of any single factor in labor. In a speech on labor in the German Reichstag, Pastor Stöcker said, "We have put the question the wrong way. We have asked; How much cheap labor does industry need in order to flourish and to pay dividends? Whereas we ought to have asked: How ought industry to be organized in order to protect and foster the family, the human individual and the Christian life?"[3] That simple reversal of the question marks the distinction between the Christian and the Mammonistic conception of life.

The Mammonistic conception of life is a modern application of the egoistic doctrine, that all action should be controlled by an enlightened self-interest. Egoism holds for the development of a superior type of individual.[4] Self should be developed and enlightened at all hazards. By thus evolving a "Superman" it would bring about such a change in society that all ethical questions, social or industrial would be automatically settled. The idea is that he who is "fit" will survive even at the expense of the unfit. It is the ideal of a life bent upon realizing to the full its own possibilities whether of sensous pleasure or personal aggrandizement. It is the outgrowth of the old idea of gross gratification of appetite "Eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die."

Throughout history we see this conception in one form or another as the fundamental motive in the actions of many. Among the Pagan peoples there seems to be a sense of the prize in personal life and of that delight in the mere exercise of vital function. They believe the mere joy of living to be sufficient justification of

3. Quoted by Rauschenbusch: *"Christianity and the Social Crisis"*, p. 370.

4. S. N. Potten: *Independent*, 70-655-657.

life. The Greek gave expression to this thought when in his old age he said,[5] "I can not eat, I can not drink; the pleasures of youth and love are fled away. There was a good time once but now that is gone and life is no longer life." The degree of ability to enjoy sensous pleasure was the measure of life's worth.

In later times Spencer[6] held to this individualistic view and attempted by the evolutionary theory to uphold his views. Life is a struggle for existence; every individual strives to preserve himself and promote his own interests. If he comes, as he surely will, into competition with his fellow-man for subsistence, the victor should have the spoils. The individuals who are best fitted for the struggle not only win, but ought to win, for, according to this view the survival of the fittest is the end of existence.

Modern commercialism is only another form of this supreme individualism. One of its axiomatic doctrines is to buy in the cheapest market and sell in the highest, without regard for the welfare of either the producer or the consumer. It looks upon labor as a commodity also to be bought at the cheapest possible wage even though it means hiring women and children. If there is coöperation it is among those of the same group and for mutual protection. If there be group organization it is only an attempt to obtain individual prosperity through concerted efforts.[7] The rule still obtains, however, "put your competitor out of business if possible."

In a striking and beautiful contrast to this ideal of individualism is the altruistic ideal of life given us by Christ. It opposes the survival of the fittest; or rather it opposes the extinction of the unfit since it tends to preserve the sick, the lame, the blind, the delinquent, the subnormal, the derelicts and failures. Jesus spoke clearly regarding this when he said, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost,"[8] also in the parable of the lost sheep:[9] "What man of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness and go after that which is lost until he find it?" Even more clearly did the Saviour indicate the purpose of his own life as he entered the synagogue, for the first time to preach to the people.

5. Quoted by Alexander: *Hibbert Journal*, Vol. 9, p. 172.
6. Frank Thilly: *Hibbert Journal*, Vol. 10, p. 262.
7. Parley Paul Womer, "*The Church and the Labor Conflict*," p. 187.
8. *Luke*, 19:10; *Matthew*, 18:11.
9. *Luke*, 15:4; *Matthew*, 18:12.

His most appropriate text was, "He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised."[10]

This definition He emphasized and interpreted by His own life. He went about doing good. Were men hungry, He fed them,[11] were they ignorant, He taught them, did He find them sorrowing[12] He consoled them. In a time of temptation or testing, were they weak of purpose, He strengthened[13] them. Wherever He found them hampered by religious conditions[14] or manacled by political or ecclesiastical opposition, He did what He could to set them free. Were they discouraged by their conduct of the past, or were they in fear for the future, He preached to them forgiveness and hope. Nor was it Christ's purpose that He should be the only one animated by such an unselfish spirit. He intends that his followers should obey the mandate: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."[15] His mind consisted of a spirit of consecration to a great cause and courage in promoting it; of sympathy with men of all sorts and conditions,[16] of forgetfulness of self, and service for others—of love, service and sacrifice.

He shows clearly in His teachings that life is understood as being not an end in itself, but a period of test in which our faith, or our will to believe, is tried through virtue of the limitations which are placed upon our understanding. Also that during this period of test we must direct our physical acts in accord with the great Law of Love established by the Christ himself. In stating this Law Christ taught that above all we must love our God, and that together with this and because of our love for God we will love our neighbors as ourselves.[17] In brief, first faith, then through faith good works with love the key-note of both. This is the essence of Christ's teachings and forms the basis upon which all else is reared.

Jesus did not content himself with the mere enunciation of this great principle of love, leaving its application entirely to us. He was a veritable personification of it. He applied it rigorously to

10. *Luke*, 4:18; *Isaiah*, 61:1.
11. *John*, 6:11.
12. *John*, 11:23.
13. *John*, 6:20.
14. *John*, 4:8-27.
15. *Phil.*, 2:5.
16. A. T. Mahan: *North American*, Vol. 199, pp. 589-598.
17. *Mark*, 12:30-31.

the Pharisees of His time in language that has become classic.[18] That He desired absolutely no caste, religiously or politically is shown in His unapproachably beautiful parable of the Good Samaritan[19] who steps across the gap between his people and the Jews. The virtue of the Samaritan consisted in his rising above the ordinary separation of life by means of a broad human sympathy. Wherever we touch the teachings of Jesus, we feel this throbbing sympathy expressed or implied.

Christ dealt with man as man in both His life and teachings. To Him human life possesses worth and dignity and is full of boundless possibilities. In man resides an infinite capacity[20] Godward. This gives a basis for endless effort, not only for one's self, but in behalf of others. If the employer will only manifest this kind of faith in his men it will cause them to attack the most difficult problems, if only they can believe a solution is possible. Jesus never tired of helping those about Him, even the most despised and degenerate, because He saw in them the possibilities of Sonship. The basal idea He tried to inculcate by precept and example was, "Every one is Worthful." This worth, however, is due to the kind of a life of which man is capable, even though he may not yet be the possessor of it—namely, divine life. It is due to the fact that he is a potential[21] child of God even though sonship is yet to be achieved. To thus become a child of God means one shall be controlled by the same loving principle that controlled Christ. That is, one becomes Christ-like by submitting willingly and joyfully to the divine will, which is one of uncalculating love. In this one particular he becomes like Christ. Moreover, this is the manifest destiny of man.

No conception of human life and destiny could be more exalted and yet it does not ignore the hard facts about life. It transcends them not by ignoring, but by conquering them. When one views Applied Christianity in this true light and then glances at the ignorance, filth, vice and disease that is prevalent among the working classes, at some of the present methods of dealing, scheming, boycotting, lockouts, etc., one is very likely to ask, "Is Applied Christianity possible?" To some it seems like something visionary and impracticable and yet history and the present day afford us

18. *Mark*, 7:5-13.
19. *Luke*, 10:25-37.
20. L. H. Miller: "*Biblical World*," April, 1914, p. 246.
21. *Matthew*, 5:43-48.

ample testimony of the power of Christianity to apply itself even to apparently hopeless conditions. This is realized whenever loving service of an entirely disinterested sort goes forth from man to man. Here is the fusion of the ethical and religious in Jesus's teaching. Brotherly love is the central and controlling ethical principle.

Jesus thus emphasized the religious basis of life and finds in that recognition the secret of the solution of all other questions.[22] He planted within men, and continues to do so where men subject themselves to it, an operative force which if permitted will become the only rule and condition, not only in the industrial world, but among mankind. The simplest illustration of this He gave in "The Lord's Prayer" when He bids us entreat "Thy Kingdom Come." The meaning of this is explained by the very next clause, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Jesus sets to work to make new men knowing that henceforth we would have a new state. Christianize the social order some men proclaim.[23] Socialize your Christianity, others cry in reply. But Jesus would only reply, "Except a man be born again he cannot enter the kingdom of God."[24] Christianity would impel by love, whereas socialism would compel by law. What our present industrial order needs is not so much new adjustment between wealth and poverty, or capital and labor, but to have men become new creatures in their lives, motives, hopes and energies. What we need[25] is better employers, whether capitalists or not, and better men, whether wage-earners or dividend receivers. In fact, what men everywhere, both rich and poor, need is not of necessity a change of environment, but a desire and power to use their present condition so as to become truer, juster and kinder men and women.

To many the ideal of human brotherhood seems to produce as good results as the combined religious and ethical ideal of love to God and to man. 'Tis true the surface effects which are all that the ordinary man sees are much the same. The atheist can, and often does live as honorably, work as hard, and as enthusiastically in the cause of social righteousness as the Christian.[26] The natural consequence of this is that the modern man looking only at the works, thinks Christian faith superfluous. It matters little, he

22. W. M. Clow: *Christ in the Social Order*, p. 81.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 88.
24. *John*, 3:3.
25. W. M. Clow: *Christ in the Social Order*, p. 188.
26. R. D. Skinner: *Forum*, Vol. 50, pp. 176-177.

says, what a man believes, so long as he acts rightly. By "right acting" he means in harmony with the popular conception of one's moral duties and relations. If this popular conception were in perfect accord with Christian principles his statement would be correct. As we have seen, however, business ethics, as also the ethics of the masses, is very largely opposed to the spirit of the Master. Moreover, Christ taught very clearly that the first and great commandment of Love toward God was prerequisite to the second command to love our neighbor as ourselves. As a matter of fact, an kind of social activity divorced from the practice of Christian humility and trust in God generates in a man a spirit of self-righteousness and self-importance which is very inferior to the character of the Christian. Consequently a very large amount of such activity produces results wholly disproportionate to efforts expended[27] because it has no spiritual basis in prayer or communion with God.

In discussing so vital a question as applied Christianity we must be very careful not to permit our personal desires to misinterpret or purposely omit vital points. As others have regarded it,[28] the question could be confined to the second commandment that our life be one of works of love, omitting the vitally important factor of Faith simply because there are opponents to Christianity. But it matters little how much pleasure one would derive from a comprehensive study of the results of love our progress in actually applying Christianity will be nil unless we take into serious account the source and motive force of that love. "Applied Christianity is the application of religious belief as a motive force for acts of love."[29] Therefore we cannot consider Christianity merely the works of love, but the love itself as the operating force; not merely works of charity brought into being by the voluntary effort of the individual, but a love service which springs from the Christ life within. Indeed, we must, and do lay stress upon works of charity and mercy, yet if we would confine ourselves to practical Christianity we can not acquiesce to the modern theory that "works" is the one thing needful. Any plan that does not attempt to lift life to the plane of the eternal is not applied Christianity. It may be applied ethics, which, indeed, the writer would in no

27. A. W. F. Blunt: *Hibbert Journal*, Vol. 10, p. 810.
28. Skinner, *Forum*, Vol. 50, pp. 169-181.
29. Skinner, *Forum*, Vol. 50, p. 180.

wise belittle. But just as the whole is greater than any of its parts, so in an even truer sense does Applied Christianity transcend and direct applied ethics.

Note further, that if we would understand or comprehend Jesus in even an approximate sense, we must realize that the heart of his heart was religion. He showed the people of His own age that the ordinary life of anxiety, chafing ambition and covetousness was no life at all; that to really live they must enter into a new world of love, service and contentment. All other activities lay in concentric circles about that redemption of the spirit and flowed out from it. Consequently no man is a real follower of Christ who has not through Him entered into filial relation with God. Nor does any man share His life that does not have a spontaneous outflow of sympathy and love into all the relations of his life, thereby reconstructing everything it touches. Whoever uncouples the religious from the industrial and social life has not understood Christ. Jesus truly was a reformer but not in the generally accepted sense. He did not expect to bring about a great catastrophe. To Him the present was seed time.[30] He spent His time sowing the seed which shall ultimately bring in a new order. He expected to develop a new society by organic growth, cell by cell. Every human life brought under control of the new spirit was an advance. Every time the thought of Divine Sonship and brotherly love took a new hold on a human mind it meant progress. Christ's purpose was thus to change society by changing the individual. The true social order of the world according to Him is symbolized in the parable of the vine and branches.[31] As branches can not bear fruit if they become separated from the vine, no more can men be righteous and just in detachment and isolation from God. His teaching is permeated with the thought that men and society are not transformed by an external law, but by transformation and growth from within. The symbol of such transformation is the seed planted in the field which after "dying,"[32] springs up producing first the blade and finally the full corn in the ear.[33] Such a life would cause even business men and wage-earners to enjoy fellowship together in filial obedience to God and in the practice of the law of love.

30. Parables of *Matthew*, 13, also *Mark*, 4:26-29.
31. *John*, 15:1-11.
32. *John*, 12:24.
33. *Mark*, 4:28.

This capacity of man for brotherhood is as truly normal as any other capacity of human nature and therefore as capable of development as any other capacity. The idea of Christian brotherhood is now beginning to dawn, and the craving for life relations which are more brotherly is all the while becoming more insistent. This is evidenced by the growth of democratic ideals, by the increasing power and prominence of the laboring classes[34] and by the quickness with which those seeking political preferment discern that they have to deal with the many rather than the few. The recent expression of distaste for autocracy by the people of Russia and the setting up of a democratic government with but little bloodshed attests this craving for justice and equality. Such a manifestation as this, however, is only the outgrowth of a burning passion for freedom in the hearts of the people in increasing number. Who would deny that Tolstoi, with his lofty interpretation of Christianity, was an important factor in fostering such a desire?

Many of our modern institutions attempt[35] to increase the well-being of men and bring about more satisfactory relations between them by an adjustment of their environment. Their advocates seem to think nothing more is needed. The State is attempting to cure abuses by a stricter regulation of the free play of egotism. Laws have been enacted regulating trusts, railroads, interstate commerce and the relations between employers and employees; eight-hour laws, factory laws, child labor laws, employers' liability laws and laws looking to the protection and improvement of the laborer in general. Some industries, believing environment determines character, have, through shrewd business perception, made apparent concessions to their employees to alleviate, as they suppose, their hardships—by good tenements, by kindergartens, factory lunches, lecture rooms with speakers, giving bonuses and presents.

These most excellent changes and innovations are made, however, in the firm belief, first: that if man's surroundings are altered the man is changed; second: if the men are changed they will be more contented; consequently will be "worth" more to the institution.[36] Such a change is applied from without, not induced from

34. Parley Paul Womer: "*The Church and the Labor Conflict*," p. 258.
35. W. M. Clow: "*Christ in the Social Order*," p. 87.
36. J. H. Muirhead: *Hibbert Journal*, Vol. 7, p. 493. Also W. M. Clow: "*Christ in the Social Order*," p. 161.

within. Energy is expended in attempting to raise the standard rather than the character.

As a matter of fact, working men do not like to have things done for them. The more that is done for them the more they feel under the power of the person who is responsible for their benefits. Consequently, though a seeming paradox, whatever the employer does to alleviate the hardships of his "hired" men, he usually is making them feel their dependence upon him to a greater degree, with the result that some of the most serious outbursts of indignation on the part of laborers have taken place amid the fairest environment that can surround conditions of toil.[37] The working men say, and quite logically, that if the company can afford all these extras it can afford to pay higher salaries. Give the laborers their choice and they will invariably choose the higher wage in preference to the more agreeable environment. They would rather take their chances even in unhealthful conditions if the wages were greater. In other words, the wage-earner realizes the employer is to quite an extent indebted to him for the funds to provide these improved tenements, parks, libraries, lessons in cooking, flower gardens, in fact, all the comforts and conveniences of the superior factories. While he is thus paying for all these things he finds his employer receiving all the praise. The world looks on and calls him a great philanthropist, whereas his employees in their heart call it a sham.[38] Such a condition does not produce happy relations between labor and capital. In fact, any industrial system that depends in the final analysis upon gratitude as the binding influence is not only unjust, but is a psychological blunder. The bond in economic life that holds employer and employee cannot be a weak and exploded virtue. Men are not, can not and ought not be held to their work by any sense of gratitude but by the broadest sense of justice.

Any reform movement, therefore, to lift us from the rut of materialism and command the attention of even a portion of the multitude, must be something very potent, very rousing and yet very simple.[39] It must appeal to the whole man. It must be practical without being base, reasonable yet not academic and emotional without hysteria. It must be high enough to coördinate

37. G. S. Grant: *North American*, Vol. 192, p. 171.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 172.
39. J. H. Muirhead: *Hibbert Journal*, Vol. 7, p. 493.

all the activities of life and to satisfy the spiritual nature. This ideal must be so very practical that it not only can maintain itself in its environment, but also serve as a stimulus and a guide to constructive industrial reform. It must be one which will illuminate the mind and strengthen the will of the white-collared capitalist at his desk as well as the grimy workman at his machine or in the ditch.

Christianity is such an exalted yet practical ideal. It would not only ask men to serve and trust each other more, but it would put an operating force within them which would help them to "by love serve one another." It would by making men resemble God, and bringing about a universality of interest make men more companionable; more eager to do good, less eager to succeed by oppression, less egotistical and self-centered; more intent upon doing service than upon demanding rights and recognition. Applied Christianity, proclaiming as a scientific fact the supremacy of the universal law of love and applying it to the individual through persuasion, high religious motive and effective legal science, is becoming the true method of adjusting industrial relations.[40] Without this science of love as a basis for action every effort at adjustment of difference between capital and labor must be as a mere phantom or image of the reality it dimly reflects.

Let us examine the labor situation still more closely. The history of the labor conflict throws much light on present conditions. Until James Watt harnessed the expansive force of steam for human purposes in 1769 man had been using localized power such as falling water, the winds and the domestic animals. The advent of the steam engine, however, introduced such a mighty force that the economic production of our race immediately took a tremendous leap forward.[41] Nor is this forward pace slackening in the least, for with the additional invention of the electric generator and the internal combustion engine new resources of power were introduced which have revolutionized every phase of our modern society. The ever increasing amount of raw material is now being changed into the finished product by complex machinery rather than by simple hand work. It seemed at first that these great changes were heralds of better days, when human suffering would

40. R. D. Skinner, *Forum*, p. 174.

41. Rauschenbusch: *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, pp. 214-18.

approach a minimum. Instead of that a prolonged sigh of misery has followed wherever the power machine has come. Before that time the workman plied his trade at home and was the owner of his few simple tools. There was a definite demand to be supplied and the rules of the guild (employers and employees belonged to and constituted this single order) or city barred out reckless competition so there was no lure of millions or fear of poverty to haunt him.

The introduction of the power machine, however, wrought great changes. Machines were too expensive to be set up in the home. This produced an opportunity which was seized by the more enterprising, who banded together, turned out a rapid flow of machine-made products, and of necessity under-bid the others in marketing their goods. New economic theories were developed which sanctioned this and were quickly made into laws. The natural result was, the great mass of workers was displaced by machines. Their misery was intense, but since the law was controlled by the owners of the machines they finally were compelled to submit to the others as masters. From this beginning has developed the incredible paradox of our modern industrial life. The very instrument, by which humanity could be blessed and be forever above poverty caused humanity, to a great degree, to become submerged in perpetual want and servitude. As wealth was multiplying pauperism was increasing in the same proportion, and becoming chronic.[42] Nor is this stating that wealth causes pauperism. It is saying, however, that in its ascent to its present state of power, capital has learned how to make wealth much faster than it has learned to distribute it justly. It has had an eye much keener for profit than its ear for the voice of God or the cry of humanity. With the introduction of the machine the former companionship of mechanic and workmen, working together in a little shop, disappeared. Two classes were created and a wide gulf separated them—on the one hand the employer, whose power was great ;on the other the wage-earner, who had ever lessening hope of rising above his class[43]. The machine meant production on a large scale, which means a tendency toward big things in the industrial world. But to finance big enterprises requires large capital and this necessitates the business group. This brought in the second group, for the inevit-

42. Rauschenbusch: *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, p. 217.

43. Mains: *Christianity and the New Age*, p. 146.

able accompaniment of organized capital is organized labor and the development of the group spirit among the working class.[44] In both cases, however, the individuals are attempting to attain individual prosperity through concerted effort.

In the business group can be seen clearly the passing of the personal element. Even corporate management eliminates personal sympathy and to a very great degree the individual sense of honor and justice. Moreover the group very largely rules the individuals of which it is composed.[45] Upon entering the business realm a man instantly finds himself ruled and dominated by forces not of his own making. The "system" hands down a few laws by which it says each member shall be controlled. As we have said, the key note of these laws is profit. Success is determined only and wholly on a money basis. That man is making the greatest success who is making the most money of any in his line. If he is making less than any one else something is wrong with him, his product, his management or his helpers. If any consideration is shown for the health and well-being of employees it is for prudential reasons or because of legal requirement. The rules of the business group thus very largely determine what apparently must be the attitude of an employer toward his surroundings. Toward other employers it must be a game of see who is the best man, who can make the most profit, who can buy his raw material at the lowest price and sell the finished product at the highest mark. Because of this subtle commercial spirit we must not permit ourselves in viewing the life of any individual to think the mischief done by his corporation is due entirely to his own personal wickedness. The great leaders in industry are not purposely committing wickedness, but they are the victims of the present industrial forces. In underpaying and over-working men or in employing women and children the man even with kind intentions is pushed by the entire group to which he belongs.

With the employer labor is a commodity to be purchased at the cheapest possible price which will fulfill the requirements. The movement toward cheaper labor has been greatly accelerated by the increasing use of machinery. The skilled workman of a few years ago can be replaced with the feeder of a machine; the intelli-

44. Womer: *The Church and the Labor Conflict*, p. 187.

45. Rauschenbusch: *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, p. 360.

gent laborer gives place to the ignorant; the American to the man of the Yellow race; the man is displaced with the woman and she in turn with the child. The great mass of employers take advantage of the fact that the cheaper and more helpless the labor the easier it is to demand the hardest conditions of toil. The foreigner who has been brought up to a lower standard of life or the helpless woman or child will submit to long hours, dangerous tools and unhealthful conditions.

With the masters, this relative reduction of the cost of labor has meant economy, therefore a corresponding increase in profit. Thus our wealth has increased to a degree that is unparalleled in the history of this or any other nation.[46] But it apparently is going to those who in various ways are proving themselves strong enough to take it instead of to those who are justly entitlted to it. This class of wealth receivers is very small compared to the great mass of wage-earners, the majority of whom are little removed from poverty. They are continually haunted by the paralyzing fear of actually coming to want, and when a time of depression comes or war stringencies are on, thousands are either thrown out of a means of livelihood or are not able to meet the higher cost of living and it is easy for them to be crowded over the line of self respect into ways of living which mean degradation and ruin. Men abandon their families and drift into vagrancy. Women sell their honor to get a living—creating a problem which is very closely related to the unequal and unfair distribution of profit. Everyone wonders why there should be any need for millions of wage-earners to have their lives thus reduced in this rich land with its marvelous productiveness, its forests, mines and fields. There is no such need.[47] Moreover, there would be no occasion for such a condition if the present business and economic relation of men were not dominated and ruled very largely by rules and motives which are unjust and selfish. Christ did not intend such inequality should ever exist. He would reconstruct the whole of human relations in accordance with the great principle of service and unselfishness under the motive power of the great law of Love.

We have shown that the teachings of Christ summon men,

46. Mains gives our national wealth as $140,000,000,000, p. 145. Womer: *The Church and the Labor Conflict*, p. 116.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 121.

whether laborers or employers, singly and collectively to bestir themselves and work for the mobilizing and developing of the moral forces latent in this Christian land, for the progressive regeneration of our industrial life. The first call to a change, however, comes to all those who have had a defective moral insight of the function of capital, and whose duty it is to give a voice to the appeal of righteousness and brotherhood. Already some of the worst effects of the reign of capitalism have been greatly mitigated, by organized labor itself, by state legislation and by a quickening of the social conscience. However, many influences which formerly protected us and gave a lessened social effect are losing their force,[48] and we are beginning to do things even more strenuously and recklessly than ever before. Machinery is being run faster, capital is more active; human life is decreasing in value, custom and prejudice are being thrown aside. The distinction between the industrial classes is becoming more marked, for as capital becomes more active and centralized the gulf now separating them grows continually larger.

We are now confronted by the question: What is to be done? We know which ideal of ethics is in harmony with Christ's teaching; we know what should be the ultimate social ideal of the business man, but what practical means and what methods should he use for its attainment? Christianity offers a practical means. If an employer or member of a corporation would be effective in applying Christ's teachings to his industrial relations he must first of all fill himself with the spirit of Jesus and divest himself of the selfish point of view. As long as a man is self righteous and complacently satisfied with his own moral and spiritual attainments he is in no condition to judge of life as Christ would judge of it. He must pass under the domination of the spirit of Christ which will bring about in him a revaluation of social values. He may, and indeed will find his judgment and ideals in opposition to some of the current ideas of commercialism. However, no man can help his neighbors until he is himself free from the spell which has been cast over their moral judgment.

Here again, we repeat that the present industrial order has woven a protecting web of idealized justification about itself. So

48. Rauschenbusch mentions as such influences: industries were in their infancy, no old economic structure, our people were immigrants, free and cheap land, p. 218.

it is with every social institution, good or bad. For instance, wherever militarism rules war is idealized. In a similar way capitalism idealizes usury and profits, which it calls the just dues of foresight and ability. It assures us that the average wage-earner is poor through his own fault. Such are the theories of those who profit by present conditions and consequently are loath to believe their lives are working harm. The employer, however, who has a vision of Sonship and would have his relations with both capital and labor in harmony with Christ's teaching must have a will, which sets justice above policy and profit; and a conception of life which "consisteth not in the abundance of the things he possesseth."[49] Such a man will in some measure incarnate the principles of Christ and because of this will be a well-spring of regenerating influences. When he speaks his judgement will be a corrective force.[50] Be he the head of a firm or merely a stock-holder he will use his every resource to inculcate into not only the business principles of his institution, but also the very lives of every individual concerned, the spirit of justice, love and service. If any new principle is to gain power in the industrial world it must take shape and life in the individuals who have faith in it; and then these believers will gain other believers.

It has been said Christianity cannot tolerate economic competition. This is undoubtedly due to the wrong application, to selfish motives and wrong methods in such competition. There is no reason why competition between two men in business need be demoralizing if the competitors have "lofty" aims and use Christian methods; indeed, competition when not unjust or destructive promotes a broader social feeling. But one says: "How can the spirit of Christ tolerate a feeling of antagonism?" It can not. If the competition were one of rendering service rather than acquiring profits the spirit of antagonism would be entirely absent. For, as a matter of fact, the degree of antagonism between two competitors varies inversely with the degree of their moral approval of the distribution resulting from such competition. Two lawyers can plead before the same court, two doctors can practice in the same town; but in both cases they compete to see who can render the best service. Why, then, could not two

49. *Luke*, 12:15.

50. Rauschenbusch: *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, p. 352.

industries thrive in the same locality, and have as their motive for competition, not selfish gain, but service rendered?

No, the Christian business man will not have to sever his relations with the business world if he would apply the law of love; neither will he say the application of this law to his relations with "men of the world," is impracticable. Others may have only selfish motives, they may be bent on making a great profit at all hazards, their business principles may be based on expediency and policy, they may estimate success in dividends allowed, but not so with the Christian employer. He estimates life value in service rendered, not in mere money returns; he would prefer to sacrifice his profit rather than to yield to mere expediency.

The attitude of the Christian employer toward his employees will be decidedly different from that manifested by most employers. No man can feel himself to be merely a "hand" or a number on the roll without being lessened in his own self- respect and lowered in his manhood. No man can be regarded as a hireling without being tempted to cherish and manifest the spirit of the hireling. Behind our industrial unrest there lies, as all close observers see,[51] not only obvious wrong, but this deep-seated sense of social injury. With the masters, practically no attempt is made to allot to each laborer his just share in the profits of their joint work.[52] The lowest motives for work are appealed to in the workmen. They are offered a wage if they work well. And the surprising thought is that in the face of this many employers are making the common complaint that their men take no interest in their work. Why should they? What inducement is held out to persuade them to put love and care into their work, since it is not theirs? As Professor Gilman says, "We must acknowledge that the wages system viewed in its simplest form of time wages does not supply the necessary motives for the workman to do his best." In fact, it is universally admitted that the best and finest work is done by those who put love into their work because it is their own and they feel responsible for its success. When a workman becomes a partner he goes about his work with new vigor and new life.

In view of this the first advance towards a change must be made

51. Clow: *Christ in the Social Order*, p. 54.

52. Rauschenbusch: *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, p. 231.

by the masters, and any movement for a revision of the existing system must take form in the apparent concession on the part of the employers.[53] The more far sighted among them who have been responsive to the appeal of Christianity for brotherly kindness are assured that what they can do for their employees above and beyond their legal and even prudential obligations is both wise and essential to the happy conduct of their affairs. But such concessions must be accompanied by a feeling of co-partnership with the laborers, else they will become dissatisfied with the thought of being dependent.

Indeed it seems that the capitalistic world of the present is increasingly impelled by a spirit of philanthropy. During the last "holiday season" millions of dollars were given by various firms to their employees, in the form of presents or bonuses. Since the first of the year, too, according to the daily press, thousands of big industries have increased the wages of their employees. The amount of money given for humane causes is now exceeding in magnitude anything ever witnessed in the past.[54] The only interpretation of the consecration of such large sums of private money to public and philanthropic uses is that there is a growing tendency on the part of capital to make itself a servant of the common good. This shows that the call for service, a Christian call, is being heard even by capital. On the other hand, however, capital in overwhelming proportions has been seeking its investment in material and selfish schemes. We have no scruples against the investment either of human skill and energy or that of capital in legitimate business. But when profits exceed all demands of private business and of private needs, that surplus should be sacredly devoted, not only to moral and philanthropic uses, but toward bringing about a more equitable distribution of the profit.

This is the spirit of Christ which calls the employer—the director of capital—to lift his motives to higher levels, and make great moral departures. The industrial world is in need of a new type of capitalist; who is dominated by the conviction that he is simply a steward for the kingdom of Jesus Christ and that it is his duty to bring his gains as endowments for the moral uses of this king-

53. A. Pulver: *Annals American Academy*, 20:61.

54. Mains gives aggregate gifts in U. S. for 1913 not including those below $10,000 as $302,000,000, p. 292.

dom. If employers would share their surplus gain with their employees the false partition between them would very largely be broken down and they would meet on the same plane of harmony. To speak a little more clearly, the Law of Love would reconcile capital and labor by bringing them to a common basis of interest in their mutual products. This calls for coöperation, which is greatly aided by a sense of divine Sonship and human brotherhood. What is needed is the creation of coöperative methods which are broad enough to include all the producers—employers, employees and purchasers. This principle has already taken a firm hold on some of the European countries and is proving to be a decided success.[55]

While, however, awaiting the general acceptance in America of such a principle the Christian employer will not wait nor hesitate to adopt it as far as he is able under existing conditions. By increasing the wage paid to the maximum he would be sharing the profits with his workmen. This action would awaken in all the spirit of common partnership. It would create an atmosphere of fidelity, of industry and thrift. This principle which is in sublime harmony with the ideals of Christ is so broad there is room for rich and poor to meet together with the feeling that the Lord is the Maker of them all.

If all employers of labor from the great firms who "check out" thousands from their gates every night to the man who has a single clerk in his office or to the mistress who has a single maid in her home were to recognize these obligations, a social sympathy would be bred between employer and employees, the value of which is above rubies.[56] Nothing could be more potent upon both the conscience and the heart of the wage-earner than an obvious exhibition of the law of love. Such an example would be impressed upon him by all the sanction of a new regard for the man he serves. When Christian love is applied the employer no longer lives a selfish life, but feels he has a service to render in regenerating society.[57] Having received the leaven in his own heart, he would leaven all whom he touched whether stockholder or wage-earner. Together they would not only be regenerated by Christ, but be infused anew with the one positive force, Love.

55. Mains: *Christianity and the New Age*, p. 308.
56. W. M. Clow: *Christ in the Social Order*, p. 164.
57. R. D. Skinner: *Forum*, 50:181.

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